

Baghawat Geeta, Class 99: Chapter 6 Summary

Greetings All,

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda summarized chapter six. It deals with one of the most important topics of spirituality, namely meditation. This chapter is also very important as in the entire body of scriptures it is the only one that has dealt with meditation so extensively. Meditation has two roles to play.

- Meditation to be performed before Vedantic Sravanam. This is an upasana to prepare the mind for Sravanam. It includes a variety of saguna ishvara dhyanam. This upasana will lead to self-knowledge through Guru Upadesha.

Suppose a person has not performed this preparatory upasana? His mind is not considered qualified enough to receive the teaching, when he performs sravanam. In such a person while he will receive the knowledge, it will not assimilate within him. It will be like oil and water, each standing separately. What that person knows and what he is will be different. If it is an unprepared mind gyana-nishta does not occur. For such cases Nidhi dhyasanam or Vedantic meditation is a compulsory requirement.

- Nidhidhyasanam is nirguna ishvara dhyanam. It is also known as atma dhyanam. Let us remember that Upasana is saguna ishvara dhyanam.

In Vedantic meditation; a person dwells upon the teaching received during sravanam; and this dwelling is done for a length of time; so that the knowledge enters my mind; enters my sub-conscious personality. In short, it irrigates my whole personality so that I and the knowledge have become one; and

thus Vedantic meditation does not produce knowledge but Vedantic meditation helps in the assimilation of knowledge; it is not the cause of Gyanam; but it is cause of Gyana nishta.

Thus we can summarize the process as follows:

Upasana: Is for obtaining gyana yogyata.

Gyanam: Is to obtain Gyanam.

Nidhidhyasanam : Is to obtain Gyana Nishta.

The word dhyana is used in all three instances, such as upasana dhyanam.

What is the topic of chapter six? Is it upsana or nidhidhyasana dhyanam? Chapter six is focused only on Vedantic meditation or Nidhidhyasana dhyanam. Why does Sri Krishna introduce Vedantic meditation here?

Because, Sri Krishna feels, Arjuna has already done sravanam in chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 so this chapter is for assimilation of the teaching.

There are six parts to chapter six. They are:

- Bahiranga sadhanani, general disciplines to be followed daily.
- Antaranga sadhanani: Specific disciplines to be followed just before meditation.
- Dhyana Swaroopam: Actual process of meditation.
- Dhyana Phalam.
- Dhyana Pratibhanda Pariharau; remedies to obstacles to meditation.
- Yoga Bhrashta: Sri Krishna answers a pessimistic question of Arjuna.

Detailing each one of them:

- Bahiranga sadhanani: (Shloka 1-9, 16 and 17).

The general disciplines to be followed daily include: a) Practice karma yoga; it is very important. A karmi cannot practice meditation.

Sri Krishna says a karma yogi is one who is able to accept all the actions that he has to do in life without grumbling. One source of mental disturbance is doing things without loving that job; when I keep on doing things; without having a love for that; there is a split in my personality; mind does not want to do it; body has to do it; therefore there is a stress and strain.

Karma Yogi accepts and performs all actions without love or hate for the action.

He performs all actions with Ishwararpana budhi. He also accepts all fruits with Prasada Bhavana. Thus he has a stress free mind. It is a mind without conflict. It is a mind of samatvam. In such a mind there is no violent reaction. Therefore Karma yoga is a must for a dhyana yogi. Sri Krishna says such a man is as good as a Sanyasi.

Have self-confidence. Never look down upon yourself. Even if you feel you don't have any qualifications, remember that you are a part of the divine. If you feel diffident, surrender to God. God, Guru and Shastra will help you.

Do not be fatalistic; fatalism is un-vedantic. We think karma theory is fatalism; this is the biggest misconception. Nowhere in the Vedas, fatalism is talked about; it always says, take charge of your life.

1. Practice self-control. When you use an instrument you should have control. Sri Krishna says God has given us this body with all the indriyas. All of them will help, if you control them. Make sure that they do not control you.
2. Practice moderation in everything. Don't indulge too much. Sense pleasures are allowed but don't over do it.

Check yourself once in a while by saying “no” to something you like. If there is a protest it means it is getting hold of you.

3. Antaranga sadhanani: (shlokas 10-15). These are specific disciplines to be practiced before a meditation. Eight disciplines are mentioned. They are:

1. Place of meditation should be clean, secluded and spiritual.
2. Time should be satvik. Early morning or evening hours are acceptable. The time of meditation should not be one, when you are rajasic or tamasic.
3. Proper seat to sit upon. Shastras don't recommend sitting on the floor.
4. Condition of body. It should be straight but not stiff.
5. Condition of sense organs. They should be withdrawn. Eyes partially closed focusing on nose or between eyebrows.
6. Breathing should be smooth and slow. Breath and mind are connected.
7. Condition of mind, one should become a mental Sanyasi for the duration of meditation. Drop all relationships such as husband, wife, child, son etc. Drop all roles. Just be a bhakta or shishya during meditation.
8. Condition of intellect or budhi: I must be convinced of the value of meditation. I must have conviction in meditation. I must be convinced that it will transform my personality.

These are the eight factors to be taken care of before meditation.

Dhyana Swaroopam: Shlokas 18-32. Dhyana swaroopam is the process of meditation. Mind dwelling upon a chosen object is meditation; which means the mind is there in meditation; mind is functioning in meditation; and mind entertains thoughts in

meditation; therefore never think meditation is silencing the mind. Vedantic meditation is not silencing the mind; it is not stopping the mind; it is not curbing the mind; it is not restraining the mind; but it is directing the mind; which means thoughts are there; but the thoughts are dealing with the subject matter that I chose. And that subject matter is whatever I have learned from the scriptures. And what have I learned? That the body is not the real I; it is an incidental instrument which will be there for a few years and will disappear; similarly sense organs, similarly the mind; they are all instruments that I handle, my higher nature is the very chaitanyam; the consciousness principle, which is aware of all of them.

This topic is discussed extensively in Chapter 2, shlokas 12-25 in the Gita. All the knowledge learned from this Sravanam is the recording process. Meditation is the retaining and reliving the teaching. Thus:

Dharana is focus.

Dhyanam is retaining the focus.

Samadhi is becoming absorbed in the subject. Here will is not required.

Sri Krishna gives example of a protected flame to describe the process.

Now seven definitions of Samadhi are provided. They are:

1. Samadhi is that stage, in which chitta uparamanam, mind subsides; mind is absorbed in itself;
2. Atma darshanam; the one's mind is absorbed in the atma darshanam; owning up one's own higher nature;
3. Atyantika sukham, I see my own higher nature.
4. Tatva nishta, is being established in one's higher nature.
5. Atyantika labha, it is a stage in which one has attained

highest in life;

6. Atyantika dukkha Nivrittihi; it is stage in which one has withdrawn from and thus one is free from all the sorrows.
7. dukkha samyoga viyogah; a stage in which a person is no more identified with the gains of anatma.

Sri Krishna then discussed Gyana phalam. This meditation transforms a person. The way I look at the world changes. The world does not change; my way of looking at it changes. One obtains freedom from ragah and dvesha. I do not get attached nor do I hate anything. I may have preferences but no attachments. As I said preferences are different from ragah-dveshah. I would prefer to have a cup of coffee is one thing; I need a cup of coffee is quite different. If you say I prefer; it is available, welcome and good; or else, OK. But when I say I need it means if that is not available; I become non-functional.

One obtains samadarshanam. One obtains equanimity. One obtains jivan mukti.

Shlokas 33-36 discusses obstacles to meditation. The specific obstacle of Vikshepa or restless mind is discussed. Two remedies are suggested for Vikshepa. First is Vairagya and second is abhyasa. Vairagya reduces raga and dvesha. **Raga dvesha is the single most important internal enemy of a spiritual seeker. We don't have any external enemies at all.** It is raga dvesha that disturbs us. It is our loves and hates that disturb us. I have provided this capacity to disturb me to Raga and dvesha. Vairagyam means reducing the ragah-dveshah slavery.

Abhyasa means practice. So practice of the meditation; here practice makes a man perfect; sheer abhyasa will improve the meditation.

The topic of meditation is now over. Arjuna , now asks a

question.

Shlokas 37-45 is a discussion of this question.

“Suppose I fail in my spiritual journey, what will happen to me?” is Arjuna’s question to Sri Krishna.

Sri Krishna answers who ever come to spirituality will gain knowledge and then moksha. Even if he does not obtain moksha he will still obtain swarga. After swarga he will obtain a very conducive birth and continue his spiritual journey taking up from where he left off in previous birth. So don’t be pessimistic Arjuna; enjoy the spiritual journey.

Shlokas 47 and 48 are the concluding verses of the chapter. They are glorification of Vedantic meditation. Of all meditators the Vedantic meditator is closest to liberation, says Sri Krishna.

This chapter is called dhyana yogah; or atma samyama yoga, because the central theme is directing the mind towards Vedantic teaching.

Take away:

1. Raga dvesha is the single most important internal enemy of a spiritual seeker.
2. Nidhidhyasanam: A person dwells upon the teaching received during sravanam; and this dwelling is done for a length of time; so that the knowledge enters my mind; enters my sub-conscious personality. In short, it irrigates my whole personality so that I and the knowledge have become one

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Class 98: Chapter 6, Verses 43 to 47

Shloka # 43:

ॐ कर्मणो भवतु धर्मो धर्मस्य च पूर्णतया शान्तिः ॥
ॐ कर्मणो भवतु धर्मो धर्मस्य च पूर्णतया शान्तिः ॥6.43॥

There he acquires memory of the ideas relating to his previous body, and he labors harder, O Bharata prince! to achieve perfection.

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, in spite of Sri Krishna's encouragement Arjuna became pessimistic with respect to his own spiritual journey. He understood that this journey requires knowledge and purification of the mind. He feels he cannot master his own mind. Mind is after all the most difficult thing to master. That is why victory over mind is considered the greatest victory. Sri Krishna says it is a pre-requisite for gyanam. Arjuna feels he will never be able to obtain it, certainly not in this lifetime. Therefore, he has already started thinking of his preparations for the next life. It is like children who take an exam and know they have not done well, thinking of taking the exam again.

Yogabhrashta is spiritual failure. Sri Krishna has started answering Arjuna's question in shlokas 40 through 45. He points out that a person on this path has no fall at all.

Shankaracharya says, once spiritual teaching is received, it cannot be destroyed. There, however, maybe a stage of temporary stagnation. It is like the glowing ember covered by ashes, even with a little fanning the fire comes back. So also such a seekers' spiritual vasanas come back to life. He picks up the thread in his next life. Spiritual failure of this janma becomes spiritual genius in next janma.

Even if one has failed in spiritual life in this life, he will still get swarga. Then he comes back in another birth to pursue spiritual life. Spiritual life can be clearly obtained only in two lokas. They are Manushya loka and Brahma Loka. If so, why not all go to Brahma Loka? Shankaracharya says going to Brahma Loka is very difficult. Getting manushya loka is also not easy. In manushya loka he or she gets the ideal continuation of his spiritual journey.

How does this continuation occur?

First, an environment for scriptural study should be available. Second, I should have an interest in such a study. Yoga Bhrashta will have both in next life, the environment and inclination. In that ideal environment (India is ideal for spirituality) the spiritual inclination arrives early in a yoga bhrashta. Swamji says any genius in any field (music, science, arts) was a bhrashta in his previous life. At death, jiva takes poorva vasanas with it to the next birth. His inclination towards materialistic world is less. He cannot explain his own inclination other than attribute it to his poorva janma vasana.

Once he has the inclination he can't take this new life for granted. He has to use his free will to promote spirituality. This inclination has to be nourished. Therefore, the Yogabhrashta strives more and more in this new life. Due to his vasanas his effort is considerably reduced. Success of his spiritual journey is assured even with lesser effort.

Shloka # 44:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 6.44 ॥

Though not a master of himself, he is attracted by his prior discipline. Even he who desires to know about Yoga goes beyond the sphere of Vedic injunctions.

How does this spiritual inclination express itself? Where ever and whenever spirituality is practiced in any form, he has an automatic interest in it. He is helplessly drawn to it. Parents often discourage a child's inclination in this area. They don't understand that child's attraction is due to his or her vasanas. Sri Aurobindo is a good example.

They say of Aurobindo that his parents did not want him to be in Indian culture at all; they liked the western culture; therefore he was given western education and sent to England; and to a materialistic atmosphere. There he comes in contact with people who are working for the freedom of India and he gets associated with those people, and he begins to feel and if I am working for the freedom of my motherland, should I not know about India, what is its culture, what is its history; philosophy and he gradually gets sucked into it and he comes to freedom struggle and goes to Pondicherry and becomes a yogi.

Therefore, if the spiritual fire is there; nobody can stop; and if the spiritual fire is not there; whatever you do it will not work.

People who don't have the spiritual fire within them, should be allowed to follow their materialistic tendencies. Encourage them to worship god. **Spiritual maturity is an evolution, not a revolution.**

Due to his vasanas, a yogabhrashta, starts his interest in spirituality as a casual (hobby) student. But his fire catches

on later. Spiritual fires are of three types: karpura buddhi (camphor), Kari buddhi (coal) and vazhathandu buddhi (banana trunk).

He becomes a camphor student. He transcends shabda brahma or karma kanda. Karma kanda is finite result. He transcends anitya phalam and obtains nithya phalam or moksha.

Shloka # 45:

योगिनो यो यत्नं करोति
सर्वदुष्कृतान्मोक्षयति॥६.४५॥

The Yogin who strives hard and who has been perfected in the course of many lives attains the supreme goal, all his sins having been washed away.

What happens to Yogabhrashta in the present life (as a spiritual genius)? How does he feel the advantage of his vasanas? Sri Krishna says, he is free from impurities; he has a shudha antahakarana or mental purity.

How does mental purity express itself?

In chapter # 5, in the beginning, this topic is discussed. **His natural inclination towards spirituality shows his mental purity.**

How did he get it? Is God partial to him? This advantage he enjoys because he has obtained it from his many, many past lives. He has clarity about life's purpose. He is not hoodwinked by materialistic goals.

Therefore, being an evolved person, he requires very limited effort in this life. His spiritual journey is a most enjoyable one. He effortlessly reaches his destination of moksha. He enjoys following Shruti-viddhi.

Shloka #46:

Baghawat Geeta, Class 97: Chapter 6, Verses 37 to 43

Greetings All,

Shloka # 37:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
यदा कुरुते ध्याता यदा कुरुते योगिनः
यदा कुरुते योगिनः यदा कुरुते योगिनः 6.37

Arjuna said:

What fate, Krishna! is in store for the lax practitioner of Yoga whose mind is rich in faith but who fails to reach perfection in Yoga?

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, Sri Krishna has comprehensively discussed all aspects of Vedantic meditation, which has to be practiced after a thorough study of Vedantic scriptures. Nowhere else is meditation discussed in such great detail. For this reason alone Chapter 6 is an important chapter. He has also talked about obstacles to meditation including mental distraction and its remedy. To succeed in meditation one has to develop Vairagyam or detachment. Without Vairagyam meditation is not possible. Without meditation an assimilation of teaching does not take place. Without assimilation of teaching one cannot obtain mukti. Hence Vairagyam is very important, per scriptures. Now Arjuna seeing himself wonders if he can ever get Vairagyam. He becomes pessimistic about obtaining moksha in this life. Swamiji says this is a universal problem. Every seeker becomes pessimistic, at some point or other, wondering, "Can I ever obtain moksha in this life?" **Pessimism is a common obstacle for every seeker.**

Arjuna has identified with majority of people and thus

In the previous shloka Sri Krishna said a seeker who places insufficient effort would not get moksha; also because he came to Gyana marga without going through karma marga he will not get swarga. Why did he not perform karmas; because, he chose to spend his time on gyana marga. Thus, neither did he have the support of karmas that could have given him swarga nor did he have complete gyana to give him moksha.

Citing an example his condition is likened to a small cloud that has been separated from the larger cloud. Wind cannot disperse a large cloud. However, wind will dissipate a small cloud. Vedantic teachings usually give examples from nature. In those times people spent a lot of time in nature and with nature unlike today. So this seeker is also like a small cloud without support of Karma or Gyanam.

Imagine a person gets out of the society and he does not have the support of a guru or ashrama; what will happen; the mind does not have karma hold; the mind does not have shastra hold, shastram has been dropped; svadharma has been dropped; thus his mind will dwell upon only sensory pleasures or other immoral things and the person ends up a mithyachari and that person can fall. That is the reason they say Sanyasa is such a highly risky ashrama because one can go out of both shastram and Varna ashrama dharma and like the cloudlet will he not get into destruction?

Hey Krishna, having fallen from the path of brahman or brahma marga or Gyana margah and from karma marga too, will he not perish; this is Arjuna's fear.

Shloka # 39:

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0 Krishna! You ought to dispel this doubt of mine in its entirety. None but You can possibly dispel this doubt.

So Arjuna is desperate now; he says; Oh Krishna, I have a great fear as to why I came to Vedanta? Oh Krishna, you should destroy this doubt of mine, because if I am going to be a trishanku, at least I can try to do some pooja, even though moksha may not come, at least some punyam may come.

Why am I asking you? There can be no other person who can destroy this doubt. Why so? Whether a man gets moksha or not can be determined only after a new birth. What will happen to us in the next janma; we do not know; why, even in this janma we do not know what will happen next year; or tomorrow itself. So bhagavan alone is karma phala dhata; therefore he alone is fit

enough to answer this question and therefore what type of janma, such a person will get later. And therefore you should answer. So, thus, in these three verses

Arjuna's pessimistic question has been given. Now Sri Krishna is going to give an optimistic answer; we will read happily.

Shloka # 40:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
अर्जुन उवाच ॥ भगवन् त्वं कथं वदसि मे ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ६.४० ॥

Sri Krishna said:

Arjuna! neither in this world nor in the world to be does he come to ruin; for no evil betides the doer of good, My son!

First of all, consoling Arjuna, Sri Krishna says, "don't worry". Then he elaborates. Suppose a man comes to gyana yoga, the Vedanta sravanam alone gives him two benefits:

- Mukhya phalam, primary benefit and
- Avantara phalam, secondary benefit or by-product

Explaining the two phalams, when you plant a mango tree; the

primary benefit you expect is mango fruit; but there are so many by-products, you get the shade of the tree; and the temperature will be lesser; the roots of the tree retain some water; and therefore in the surrounding area, there is more coolness.

Mukhya phalam: If a person has all required qualifications, he will get gyanam and punyam. If he does not have sufficient qualifications, he will just get the secondary phalam of punyam alone. **In chapter # 18, Sri Krishna says even if a person listens to Gita , without understanding it, it produces punyam.** It is similar to sahasra nama japa. Punyam here means one gets swargam.

Oh Partha: for a Gyana margi, a person who has come to shastra sravanam, there is no downfall at all either in this janma or after death; there is no question of spiritual fall. What is the reason? Because such a person happens to be mangala-karta, he is doing a noble action, even listening to Gita is a mangala karma, which

Sri Krishna called in the fourth chapter, as Gyana yagna.

Even though no homa kunda is involved; even though no oblations are involved; this Gyana yagna will give as much punyam as any other vaidika karma; and that punyam is the minimum result that one will get. But if he has got qualification, he would not require this punyam; because Gyanam itself is going to give him moksha; therefore kalyana krit is equal to mangala karta.

Such a person will never have a downfall.

Shloka # 41:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १८.४१ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १८.४१ ॥

Reaching the spheres of the meritorious, and after sojourning

there long lasting years, the one who has slipped from Yoga is born in a home of pure and prosperous householders.

This shloka discusses what happens to such a seeker, a Yoga Bhrashta, after death. Such a person, who has accrued punyam by listening to scriptures, obtains as secondary benefit, swarga.

Madhusudhana Saraswathy Swami quotes a verse and he says that one minute of Vedanta sravanam is equal to 100 of yagas and it is equal to giving the danam of the entire earth; not one acre or two acre; the entire earth is gifted; all those punyams will come by Vedanta sravanam ; the idea is that this itself is a very sacred karma.

He will remain in swarga for many years. He will enjoy pleasures as well. Then God gives him an appropriate birth to continue his spiritual journey.

He will be born in a prosperous and cultured family. **Only in such a family can one pursue spirituality. If one is born in poverty, one does not have time for spirituality.**

Suppose one is born in a family with prosperity but without culture? Sri Krishna says, this will not help him. Money without culture is dangerous; because all the money will be used on purely materialistic pursuits such as clubs, alcohol etc. Such a person performs no pooja, has no religion, has nothing; that is in fact worse than being born poor.

In the new life he will use all his prosperity for spiritual growth. He will perform more of nishkama karma; he can do more of service because dharma is there in the mind; money is there; when dharma and artha come together, he will use all the money for noble activities; nishkama karma will be more and all those karmas will give him more purity and sadhana chatushtaya sampathi. In the purva janma he failed because of his incomplete qualifications; now all those qualifications will be completed in the next janma and he will be ready for

Gyanam.

Now, Sri Krishna gives a second possibility although it is a rare one.

Shloka # 42:

योगीनां केषुचिद्भवं भवति
योगिनो भवति केषुचिद्भवं 6.42

Or , he is born in a family of wise yogins. This sort of birth , however, is far rarer in the world.

He is born to a Gyani, although they may not be in prosperity. Not born in prosperity here means they lead a very simple life. **When there is Gyanam, poverty is not a curse.**

It will be considered as an ideal thing for following tapas. You do not have to specially practice sanyasa; because you have to have something to renounce; therefore I need not work for sanyasa. Being born to Yogi's he need not go in search of a guru as well.

Fewer possessions mean less to worry about.

Thus, such a birth, as child of a gyani, is a rare one. It is rare because Gyanis themselves are rare and a grihasta gyani is rarer still.

The next question was: Will I start my spiritual sadhanas from scratch again or is it a continuation of my knowledge into the next birth?

Sri Krishna says, "You will be born with spiritual knowledge of the previous birth." He is thus a spiritual genius. So, a spiritual genius was probably a Yoga Brashta in his previous birth.

Shloka # 43:

योगीनां केषुचिद्भवं भवति योगिनो भवति केषुचिद्भवं

There he acquires memory of the ideas relating to his previous body, and he labors harder, O Bharata prince! to achieve perfection.

In the new birth, in a prosperous family or Gyani's family, this jiva gets associated with spiritual gains of his previous birth.

Why is it so?

As per shastras, between the two janmas, body is different but not the mind. While body dies, the mind does not. Sukshma shariram does not die.

A mother gives birth to a body but not the mind. Every child comes into this world with his or her own Vasanas. In the early years the vasanas remain dormant but manifest themselves in later years.

How do you know a child is a spiritual genius? From its inclinations. In Vedanta class's people who attend are of various age groups, young and old. Age is of the body, not the mind. Gyana Vrudha (old) is a mature person. Body is 15 but Gyanam maybe 95 years old.

Take away:

1. Pessimism is a common obstacle for every seeker. Will I ever get moksha in this life?
2. In chapter # 18, Sri Krishna says even if a person listens to Gita without understanding it, it produces punyam.
3. If one is born in poverty, one does not have time for spirituality.
4. When there is Gyanam, poverty is not a curse. Poverty here means leading a simple life.
5. A mother gives birth to a body but not the mind. Every

child comes into this world with his or her own vasanas.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Class 96: Chapter 6, Verses 35 to 37

Greetings All,

Shloka # 34:

मनोमयं हि मन कृच्छ्रं धीमतामृतमखिलम्
मनोमयं धीमतामृतं कृच्छ्रं धीमतामृतमखिलम्॥6.34॥

The mind is indeed fickle, O Krishna! a tormentor, powerful and hard. I deem its control as extremely difficult as that of the wind.

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, in the first part of Chapter six Sri Krishna has completed his discussion of topic of meditation. This topic has four parts to it. They are the general disciplines to be followed before meditation (Bahiranga Sadhanani), specific disciplines (Antaranga Sadhanani) to be followed before meditation (Dhyana swaroopam), the actual process of meditation and finally benefits of meditation (Dhyana Phalam). After completion of this topic, Arjuna asks a question about

It may be held in check.

Sri Krishna said:

Here Sri Krishna presents the remedies to Arjuna's problem in shlokas 37-39. It is also known as Vikshepa Parihara. Vikshepa is extroverted-ness of mind while parihara means its remedy. Sri Krishna tells Arjuna his problem is not unique. It is a universal problem. That is the reason it is addressed by the shastras. First, one has to acknowledge the problem, and then the solution comes.

Sri Krishna says while handling the mind is difficult, it is not impossible. He presents two methods to overcome the mind problem. They are:

1) Abhyasa and

2) Vairagyam.

What is abhyasa? Abhyasa means practice. We should remember the mind dwells on anything it has an interest in without distraction. Thus, while reading a novel one can get so engrossed in it that one forgets time. In this case the mind is able to focus fully & effortlessly. We as humans do have the ability to concentrate; the question is concentrating on what? How to develop an interest in the field? By learning of its value says Swamiji.

Thus, interest leads to love; and love leads to concentration. This is called viveka abhyasa and leads to Nithya-Anithya viveka.

And how do you develop a value; only by trying to understand its superiority; and this process is called viveka abhyasah. One sees the superiority of something by repeatedly reading about it; talking about it; sharing it; you develop a value for it; it is called nitya anitya vasthu vivekah. So develop healthy habits by knowing the greatness of dharma, by knowing

I hold that for the man whose self is uncontrolled, Yoga is hard to achieve. On the contrary, it can be won by him who has disciplined it by employing appropriate means.

So the same idea Krishna is clarifying further. Viveka and vairagya are only the two methods by which the mind changes its interest from the perishable to

the imperishable. It changes its interest from something fake to something real. And if that mind has not practiced viveka and vairagya; such a mind is called asamyatatma mind;

Atma here means mind; asamyatam means not channelized; channelized from the perishable to imperishable; from the unhealthy to healthy; from artha kama pradhana to dharma moksha pradhana.

In shloka, atma means mind. For such a person, without control of mind, meditation is difficult.

Whereas when you have got interest for something your mind will be only dwelling upon that; whatever I love, the mind effortlessly dwells on that; pasyan, srinnvan, sprrsan jignan; it will think of that only; similarly when I have got a value for that; the mind will naturally run towards that.

When I have high value for spirituality mind runs towards it. One becomes like a new mother who has given birth to a child. A mother's mind is always on her newborn baby. A mother values her child. So, also does the person who has discovered a new value in life.

Thus, one with Viveka and vairagya, will have a mind without distractions and he will be able to able to perform Vedantic meditation. One who has disciplined his mind through viveka and vairgyah should read the scriptures, dwell upon the basic teachings of our scriptures, and understand how from world dependence one moves to God dependence and then to self-dependance. He should see the abstract benefit of scriptural

knowledge. Sri Krishna says, have whatever you want but depend upon Ishwara.

Shloka # 37:

शुद्धं चित्तं योगिनः
शुद्धं चित्तं योगिनः शुद्धं चित्तं योगिनः
शुद्धं चित्तं योगिनः शुद्धं चित्तं योगिनः शुद्धं चित्तं योगिनः 6.37

Arjuna said:

What fate, Krishna! is in store for the lax practitioner of Yoga whose mind is rich in faith but who fails to reach perfection in Yoga?

With previous shloka Sri Krishna concludes his answer to Arjuna's question on how to handle a restless mind. What is the solution? Solution is viveka and vairagyam, which means developing an interest in the object of meditation; which is possible only by reading those books which talk about the glory of those objects; and also through satsanga; having friends who have got such values.

Satsang is very important. Shankaracharya says the following about Satsang:

satsaṅgatvē nissāṅgatvaṁ;
nissāṅgatvē nirmōhatvam |
nirmōhatvē niścalatattvaṁ
niścalatattvē jīvanmuktiḥ ||

Nissangatvam means Vairagyam.

The Satsang's values also come to you. Thus, your values change. Anything you get addicted to, you find a way to get out of it. Satsang helps with our addiction. Instead of Viveka the word abhyasa is used in shloka. With Chapter # 6 topic of meditation is over. Now Arjuna asks a question. He is

pessimistic about managing his mind. This pessimism is also a human weakness. Sri Krishna says faith in one self is very important. In the beginning of the 6th chapter, Krishna said never look down upon yourself; never be diffident; because if I do not have self-confidence; atma kripa is not there. Arjuna's question is, will all the sadhanas that I have performed in this life be wiped out in next life and do I start anew?

Shlokas 37, 38 and 39 are Arjuna's pessimistic questions. Those who struggle in spirituality are called Yoga Bhrashta. Failure comes only to those who attempt. What happens to them in next birth?

Yoga bhrashta is described as one who has fallen from spirituality. Chalit manas means he has fallen. He fell due to lack of insufficient effort. Effort was not enough due to many obstacles. Obstacles are of three types. They are:

- Supernatural;
- Surroundings; and
- One Self, such as ill health etc.

Even though he could not put in enough effort, he was sincere. What happens to him? He could not obtain moksha despite his sincerity. To be born a human being with interest in spirituality and being able to pursue it requires a lot of punyam. So, what happens in his next birth? Arjuna explains his pessimism in this shloka.

Take away:

1. Viveka Abhyasa and Vairagyam are essential for control of mind.
2. Control of mind is difficult. Mind likes to focus on things it likes. Thus, we can get absorbed in a novel or a movie we like. The mind has to develop a liking for Vedanta. Over time the mind will come to love Vedanta. It will then be able to focus on the teachings.

or discipline of the mind. If mind is undisciplined the Vedantic study remains intellectual. Mano-nigraha is prescribed for certain people; one's who study and understand Vedanta but whose mind is not disciplined. When should I incur mental discipline? When I study Vedanta and Vedanta remains in one corner in my day-to-day life while my emotional problems continue. There is a gap between what I know and what I am. My problem is not knowledge but lack of mental discipline. Vedanta says such a person needs mano-nigraha. And since many people face this problem, shastra discusses mano-nigraha as a discipline to be practiced after the study of Vedanta.

Why do some people have this problem and others don't? Shastra says qualifications for studying Vedanta known as Sadhana Chatustaya Sampathihi have been prescribed. For people who are qualified, mano-nigraha is not prescribed. For those who are not qualified but still study Vedanta, they need to perform Mano-nigraha. Sri Krishna knows Arjuna has this problem hence he prescribes it. Arjuna confesses he has this problem as well.

In Mandukya karika, in the name of mano-nigraha, Vedantic meditation is prescribed, and the karika mentions four obstacles. Sri Krishna does not deal with all the four obstacles here. However, I thought, I will just briefly mention them. They are: layah, vikshepa, kashaya and rasasvada. These are the four obstacles, which stand between my meditation and me.

Explanation of the four types of obstacles is:

1. Layah: Layah means the dullness of the mind or sleepiness of the mind. This is a universal complaint when we sit for meditation. So sleep is a common problem and it is tamas dominant.
2. Vikshepa: Indicates an overactive mind. It makes the mind wander.
3. Kashaya: Mind is non-functional. It is between dull

and active. Shock, trauma, separation etc., can stun the mind into this state. Extreme happiness can also cause this state.

4. Rasasvadaha: Pleasant feeling felt during meditation. It is not atmanada or Brahmananda. It is a condition of joy at quietude. The difference is brahmannada is enjoyed at all times while rasasvada is only present during meditation. Don't be enamored by this state. It can be addictive. It is an obstacle to meditation. In this state if somebody disturbs your meditation, you get upset.

Gyani's pleasure is in pashyan srinvan, sparshan, jignan; therefore rasasvadaha, enjoying meditation pleasure is an obstacle.

What can one do about rasasvadaha? Instead of enjoying the pleasure, you have to dwell upon the teaching; which says you are ananda; not only during meditation, but also during an active life.

So these are four obstacles and what are the remedies?

Gaudapada himself says: the sleep should be countered by two methods; one is removing the cause of sleep and also by practice.

1. Following are causes of Laya.

- Over eating and then meditating; or Bahu Ashnan.
- Upset stomach or Ajirna.
- Sleep deficit or Nidra Sheshaha.
- Mind not habituated to meditation or abhyasaha.

Pavlovian association of mind; Mind should not go to sleep during meditation. The mind associates closing the eyes and withdrawal from the activities with the sleep alone. Therefore in meditation when you do all these things; mind thinks, Oh he is going to sleep sitting; the mind has to be trained; and the

mind should know that this is the time of meditation; So by abhyasah the mind learns. This is the method of remedying the problem of sleep.

3. Vikshepa: Here too practice of Vairagyam is recommended as remedy. Sri Krishna discusses Vairagyam at a later stage when we will also get into it.
4. Kashayaha: Anger, jealousy, suppressed emotions. One is not aware of these emotions. In loneliness they surface such as while at an Ashram. Guadapada says let the steam out and release the emotions.
5. Rasasvada: By proper discrimination or understanding that this pleasure is conditional. I should remember that I am poornaha all the time.

Shloka # 34:

मनोमयं हि मनं क्रियासु तन्निबन्धनमचेतसा
मनोमयं हि मनं क्रियासु तन्निबन्धनमचेतसा 6.34

The mind is indeed fickle, O Krishna! a tormentor, powerful and hard. I deem its control as extremely difficult as that of the wind.

The hyperactive mind is intense in my case, O Sri Krishna, says Arjuna. It makes other organs turbulent as well.

The mind is like a churning rod. When mind is active mouth becomes active, talking and eating; eyes become active without concentration and wanders; legs walk up and down.

When mind is disturbed it disturbs all indriyanis. Mind is very powerful. Mind does not obey nor follow the intellect. Normally intellect drives the mind.

Citing an example: initially the coffee drinking is intellectual. Later body demands it and even later this can cause withdrawal symptoms, when you stop coffee. While you wish to withdraw from coffee, your mind does not. This is the

split personality every Vedantin goes through. This re-orienting the mind or vasana is a painful affair. It is like stopping drinking of alcohol. Remaining sober is painful. Vedanta considers us drunk from our many habits. It requires time and effort to withdraw from our ingrained habits.

Arjuna says I find it difficult, like controlling the wind. O Sri Krishna, You have to help me.

Take away:

1.Through shravanam and mananam, one gets Gyanam; through nidhidhyasanam, one converts gyanam into gyana nishta.

2.Nidhidhyasanam is also called jivanmukti. I am no more under the tyranny of the world and its people. I achieve inner psychological freedom.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

**Baghawat Geeta, Class 94:
Chapter 6, Verses 28 to 32**

Greetings All,

Shloka # 28:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १० ॥ २८ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १० ॥ २८ ॥ 6.28 ॥

Thus integrating himself always, the sinless Yogin easily achieves contact with Brahman or infinite bliss.

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, in this chapter of the Gita, Sri Krishna is talking about benefits of Vedantic meditation. Vedantic meditation is dwelling on the teaching received from Guru. By dwelling, the teaching gets assimilated. The indication that the assimilation of teaching is happening is when I don't forget the teaching during my day-to-day transactions. When teaching is not assimilated, it is available to me only during Sravanam because, later, my old personality comes back. While I have Gyanam it does not help me during transactions or crisis. Knowledge that does not help me in day-to-day life is useless. Therefore, I should be able to assimilate the teaching. Only with enough time, can I assimilate the teaching. Just as when they construct the wall or a roof, to make the wall well-set, they do the job of curing, that is pouring water; the more the water is poured and gets absorbed in the wall or roofing; the more well-set it is; and therefore the question is am I willing to give time for Vedanta? Giving time to Vedanta is Nidhidhyasanam. **And, what is this teaching of Vedanta? The teaching is:**

- 1. The first stage of teaching is I am not the body mind complex; but I am the consciousness inhering the body, mind complex. I am the atma, not the anatma; I am the dehi; not the deha; I am the spirit; not the matter.**
- 2. The second stage of teaching is I, the consciousness, which inheres this body, not only inheres this body, but the very same consciousness is inherent in all the**

bodies; Therefore I the consciousness is in every body. First lesson is I the consciousness am different from the body and pervading the body; the second level of teaching is, not only, I pervade this body; but I pervade, I inhere every body,

- 3. And the third and final level of teaching is in fact, I am not in everybody; on the other hand, all the bodies are in Me; the space like Consciousness.**

When I say I am in every body, it is called antaryamitvyam; when I say everybody is in me, it means sarva adharatvam;

Thus, initially, atma is sarva antaryami; then later atma is sarva adharah or adhishtanam.

It is like understanding space that I have spoken about before. First I talk about the space, which is other than the wall, which is confined within this room. I say space is that which is available within this room. And then I say the space is not only in this room; space is in every room. And finally I say in fact space is not in the hall, on the other hand, all the halls are within the one all-pervading space. **When you say space is within the room; it is called antaryamitvyam. When you say all the rooms are in one-all pervading space, it is called sarvadharatvam.**

I should never forget this teaching even at the time of a great tragedy. I should remember it all the time so that it entrenches in me as Nidhidhyasanam. The mind should get saturated with this knowledge. So, Nidhidhyasanam is giving time for Vedanta. The more you invest the better.

Shloka # 29:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 6.29 ॥

With equality of vision everywhere, he whose inner sense has been attuned to Yoga beholds the Self in all beings and beings

in the Self.

Gyani is one whose mind is saturated with this knowledge. Mind invokes the knowledge it is saturated in. A scientist is also one with a saturated knowledge that is how Newton saw the universal law in the falling apple. If you are a Vedantin, you will only see Vedanta. In the shloka, Yoga means Nidhidhyasanam and Yukta means saturated. This saturation occurs through Vedantic meditation. He sees the Atma in everyone, even in normal interactions. The Atma is like a thread that keeps all beads together. While he does see the physical, intellectual and emotional differences; but in and through the differences, he does not lose sight of the oneness of atma. It is like seeing the one gold inherent in all ornaments.

And what is his vision? **He sees the atma as residing in every living being. It is like seeing that space is present in every hall.** This is also called Sarva-Anataryami-darshanam. And he also sees the reverse vision. What is reverse vision? Instead of space is within the hall, you begin to say, all the halls, all the planets, all the stars, all the galaxies, they are all in one space.

All bodies are in one Atma. And he is aware of the fact, that atma is imperishable while bodies are perishable and anatma is perishable. And when he is looking for security in life he hold on to atma; when ananda is needed; holds on to atma; when limitlessness is needed; holds on to atma; and for everything else holds on to anatma.

Thus, there are the two channels of atma and anatma. We should know how to use them. The tragedy of human being is he expects security from insecure things, insecure people and insecure relationship. He seeks security in the insecure anatama.

Gyani knows what to seek from where. If he is hungry, he will not go to atma; atma will not help you there. But when you

every being (bodies) in God. This God is the formless Atma. **Then, why do we worship form?** To appreciate formless, mind has to be made subtle and has to be prepared. Then it realizes formed God is not permanent rather it is the formless one that is. What is the benefit of this? Advantage is you are always with God. The all-pervasive God is not subject to arrival and departure. I will never go away from him. Such a Gyani can't be blackmailed by anybody. Why should I depend on anyone when I have God with me?

Citing story of Birbal, Birbal told Akbar, "You can do something even God cannot do. You can banish anyone from your kingdom."

God cannot banish anyone. Where will he push you? He is everywhere. For such a devotee I never disappear. We are inseparable. In other forms of Bhakti, God comes and goes. I am He and He is I.

In the shloka Pranashyati means does not disappear from me. Nash means disappear.

Shloka # 31:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 6.31 ॥

Conforming to unity, the Yogin who adores Me, present in all beings, lives in Me, no matter how he appears to live.

At this level of highest bhakti experiences of bhakti differ. Before, I saw God as a human with all attributes and so was my experience of Bhakti. I took bath, so I gave bath to God. God also needs decoration, thus we have Shodash Upachara. Shankaracharya, in a work of his "para puja" says, "When I know You as an absolute God how can I offer you asanam when the whole world is in you?" Offering regular puja appears irrelevant. Inviting God does not make sense to him. His appreciation is the very Gyanam of God.

“ He worships me by his perception of Me everywhere”.

By seeing Gods one-ness, ekatvam, one present in every being in life, remaining in advaita drishti, he worships Me.

Such a person, a Sanyasi, need not do a formal worship. In a Math he may perform a formal worship for sake of devotees. His puja is the very Gyana Yagna, appreciation of God. Even though he does not practice regular rituals (sandhyavandanam etc.) his bhakti has reached invisible dimensions. Gyani’s bhakti is the highest and most refined bhakti. He can be leading any life style or be in any ashrama. His transformation is within him and not external to him. “Such a Gyani is in Me”. The words Mayi vartate means he is in Me.

Citing another example, a Gyani was sitting in a temple in front of God with his feet stretched out towards God.

People objected and told him you are disrespecting god. He asked them, show me a direction where God is not there and I will move my leg in that direction. Everywhere he turned his leg a shivalinga appeared. “We are inseparable”, said the Gyani.

Shloka # 32:

सर्वभूतस्यैव ह्यहंकारोऽस्मिन् भक्त्या युक्तो योगिनः
सर्वभूतानि चात्मैव गच्छन्ति तदात्मनो गच्छन्ति॥6.32॥

Arjuna! He, who sees alike pleasure or pain in all beings, on the analogy of his own self, is deemed the supreme Yogin.

Here Sri Krishna says a Gyani’s mind expands to such an extent that he identifies with all bodies as his own. And therefore all the bodies become like my bodies, my hands, and my legs. Such a Gyani can’t hurt anyone, as he will be hurting himself. Gyani becomes an embodiment of compassion and sympathy. He sees and empathizes with the pain of others. He cannot cause pain to others and if there is pain to anyone;

then immediately and automatically, he goes to his rescue. He looks at every human being as himself. He has no partiality or selfishness. And therefore he follows **the universal value of, what I do not want others to do to me; I should not do to others.**

He is happy with others' happiness as well. Anybody's sorrow is his sorrow. And therefore the universal identification of a gyani is indicated; universal love of a gyani is indicated. Such a Gyani is the greatest person in the world; he is the greatest yogi, he is the most accomplished person.

Complaint of Vedanta is that it is selfish to pursue only self-knowledge. Sri Krishna says Gyani is never selfish. He withdraws from one family to identify with all families; from one house to identify with all; it is a withdrawal to expand. **Self-knowledge is withdrawal from finite to identify with infinite.**

Tragedy is that now we identify with just a few. Sanyasa is withdrawal from limited identification. He does not identify with nationality, caste etc. This universal expansion and compassion is the result of Gyana Nishta.

Take away:

1. Teaching of Vedanta:

- **first stage** of teaching is I am not the body mind complex; but I am the consciousness inhering the body, mind complex.
- I the consciousness am different from the body.
- I am the atma, not the anatma; I am the dehi; not the deha; I am the spirit; not the matter.
- **second stage** of teaching is I, the consciousness, which inheres this body, not only inheres this body, but the very same consciousness is inherent in all the bodies;
- **the third** and final level of teaching is in fact, I am not in everybody; on the other hand, all the bodies are

in Me; the space like consciousness.

2. The universal value: what I do not want others to do to me; I should not do to others.
3. Swamiji says, one should remember the teaching again and again until it saturates me. In this saturated state one day the knowledge suddenly becomes reality within me. This is Nidhidhyasanam.
4. Gyani sees the atma as residing in every living being. It is like seeing that space is present in every hall. Think, do we ever consciously see the space in a hall? Try seeing the space rather than the room or the hall. It will give you a different perspective.
5. Self-knowledge is withdrawal from finite to identify with infinite.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

Vedic Quote: Watch your thoughts....

“Watch your thoughts, they become words;
watch your words, they become actions;
watch your actions, they become habits;

watch your habits, they become character;
watch your character, for it becomes your destiny.”

This is a quote one often sees in the class rooms and other public places and attributed to many scholars like Ralph Waldo Emerson, Lao Tzu, Frank Outlaw, Gautama Buddha, Bishop Beckwaith, Father of Margaret Thatcher and Mahatma Gandhi. Sometimes it is attributed to anonymous.

This is also a quote often mentioned by Swami Paramarthananda in his Upanishads and Baghawat Geeta classes. When I inquired, Swamiji indicated that the origin is from Taitreya Aranyaka of Krishna Yajur Veda. Subsequently, I traced the origin of the quote to Taitreya Aranyaka, Chapter 1, Anuvaga 23, Verse 1. Here is a part of the verse in Sanskrit:

ॐ सोमं सोमं सोमं सोमं सोमं सोमं सोमं सोमं

सोमं सोमं सोमं

सोमं सोमं सोमं

सोमं सोमं सोमं सोमं सोमं

सोमं सोमं सोमं सोमं सोमं

सोमं सोमं सोमं सोमं

Shri Jayanthilal Patel, who is my Sanskrit teacher, gave the literal meaning of the verse as:

सोमं सोमं सोमं सोमं सोमं सोमं सोमं सोमं

Because of that whatever one thinks by mind

सोमं सोमं सोमं

that one does

सोमं सोमं सोमं सोमं सोमं

What is first in the mind as seed

□□□ □□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□

that later forms as desire

□□□ □□□□□□ □□□□□□□ □

That is what this proclaimed

The quote, as currently formulated and presented at the beginning of the post, has practical applications by asking to us watch our thoughts, words and action. These three form our habit and character which ultimately determine our destiny. But in Vedanta, it has deeper meaning:

- Each of us control our destiny as we control our thoughts, words and action. We and we alone control our destiny.
- Katha Upanishad states that, atma, our non-changing consciousness, witnesses every one of our thoughts. We generally lose sight of the consciousness and act on our thoughts. This, in turn, impacts our destiny.
- Katha Upanishad gives a wonderful example comparing a chariot to our life's journey. In this example, control over thought patterns and mastery of sense organs are equated to pulling in the reins of the horses drawing the chariot.
- Taitreya Upanishad states that consciousness (atma) is the witness of the arrival and departure of our thoughts, indicating we, our consciousness, control our thoughts.

We may never know who the author of the quote as currently formulated, but its wisdom is based on the Vedas, specifically Taitreya Aranyaka, Chapter 1, Anuvaga 23, Verse 1 of Krishna Yajur Veda. Maybe that is why sometimes this quote is attributed to Buddha or anonymous.

Bhagawat Geeta, Class 93: Chapter 6, Verses 27 and 28

Greetings All,

Shloka # 27:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 6.27 ॥

Indeed the bliss supreme accrues to this sinless Yogin whose mind has been stilled, Rajas suppressed, and who has become Brahman.

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, in this chapter of the Gita, Sri Krishna is elaborately discussing the topic of Nidhidhyasanam. Nidhidhyasanam is only relevant after Sravanam and Mananam of Vedas. Actual knowledge takes place during Sravanam. When I see myself in the mirror, if it is a clear one, I can get a good picture of myself so long as my vision is also good. Guru keeps the verbal mirror in front of the student and then he gets a good picture of himself in the verbal mirror. And

So long as this teaching is properly presented, and the listener has got a defect-free mind, this very teaching can and will generate the knowledge in the mind and therefore we should remember knowledge is only through sravanam. Vedantic meditation does not give rise to knowledge.

And then this has to be followed by my mananam. This has to remove any trace of doubt with regard to the teaching. It has to remove any trace of doubt with regard to **the fundamental aspects of Vedanta, which are:**

- **Brahman is the substratum of the world; and**
- **The world is dependent on Brahman, and**
- **Brahman the substratum is none other than myself.**

Thus, sravanam and mananam should do the job of producing knowledge. Thus, conviction regarding Vedantic teaching has to take place only through sravanam and mananam. Once this has happened what is the role of meditation? The role of meditation is to enjoy the benefit of the knowledge.

Our problem is, we seem to know and understand the teaching; but the promised benefit does not seem to appear. The scriptures say that a Gyani is free from emotional problems but when I look at myself from that standpoint, I feel, there is a big gap between a Gyani and me. Therefore we doubt our knowledge.

Sri Krishna says that there is no defect in knowledge. What we lack is not knowledge rather we lack the benefit of knowledge. This benefit of knowledge is shanti or freedom from anxiety; sense of fulfillment; freedom from jealousy, hatred etc. and therefore the role of nidhidhyasanam is removing the block between Gyanam and Gyana phalam.

And what is the block between knowledge and the benefit of mano shanti? The block is our habitual ways of thinking and our habitual ways of looking at ourselves. We are habituated to look at ourselves as a physical person; or as an emotional person, or as an intellectual person; whereas Vedanta has taught us that physical body is not ourselves. Therefore, the physical identification, emotional identification, etc. are our habitual way of looking at ourselves.

Our response to life and events is also habitual. Everything is based on our habits. Citing an example, Swami Dayananda Saraswathi used to say that in India he would get into any car on the front, left hand side; the passenger side. When he visited USA, he would tend to do the same thing there as well.

Unfortunately in USA the passenger side is the right side. This was a habitual response. These habits have developed over a very long time. The word Vasana is used to denote our habitual response. Nidhidhyasanam makes me to relook every thing in context of Vedanta including all relationships. I will not call many situations as problems anymore. Furthermore, verbalization reflects our habits as words represent our thinking. A change in words changes our thinking. Problems that we face now are not a problem anymore, per Vedanta as Prarabdham causes them.

And therefore nidhidhyasanam is to invoke my Vedantic personality, and learn to re-look into myself; in the light of Vedanta, learn to relook into one's family situation, work situation etc. In the light of Vedanta one should re-look all problems. We should learn to rename them; we will not call them a problem, anymore.

This relook in context of knowledge of Vedanta is nidhidhyasanam. Success and failure are just words.

Citing an example imagine two people are together running a business and one person expected five percent profit; other person expected fifteen percent profit and the profit was 10%. And now the first person is going to say that it is wonderful while second person is disappointed. The result remaining the same, one calls it success while another calls it a failure.

Therefore most of our responses are born out of tagging; which is born out of thinking; which is born out of our knowledge or ignorance;

So Vedanta is a painful, time-consuming re-assessment of our situations in life; and in that reassessment, I should be able to say I am happy, not because of situations, but in spite of situations. Citing another example: A Swamiji lost his eyes because of diabetics. People were shocked. Swamiji himself was happy and he consoled people who felt sorry for him. He told

them, now he could focus on God fully without distraction of the external world. He had changed his perspective with his blindness.

Abhibhava means you don't solve rather you dissolve the problem. Similarly, Vedanta does abhibhava of the ego's problems; they become insignificant; they become too small in front of the poornatvam that I have discovered; and this abhibhava is the job in meditation. I look at every problem of mind and see it as insignificant. It is like the stars during daytime; they are as good as absent.

Once I change my perspective, my anxiety goes away. My future continues to be unpredictable, as always, still the unpredictability does not give me anxiety. Gyani's peace of mind is not because his future has become predictable; Gyani's freedom from anxiety is not because of predictability; but in spite of unpredictability. This is called Jivan mukti. It is not a thoughtless state. It is not a mystic state. It is re-looking world and myself in context of Vedanta.

Citing another example, In Bhagavatham, they describe how Sri Krishna looked at all the Yadavas fighting and killing each other. And Sri Krishna sees right in front of his eyes; the Shapam coming through; the shapam being that you are going to fight and die; and Sri Krishna is the Lord himself; and Sri Krishna could not stop his family members fighting and dying one by one. Soon he is also going to join them; he is also going to be shot; and Bhagavatham describes Sri Krishna's perception of those events; leaning on a tree; with his hands on the tree; he looks at the whole event with a smile; it is a choice-less situation, even for Bhagavan. The Omnipotent, Omniscient Sri Krishna choice-lessly sees the event of every family member of his dying one by one.

And what was Sri Krishna's response; a smile; not that he is happy about it; but the thing is he looks at the situation and knows a choice-less situation has to unfold. Where there is a

choice, Sri Krishna will certainly take an action; Therefore, Gyani does take action where it has to be taken; Gyani also accepts the situation where it is choice-less. So the world and the life will continue.

Change is in our perception and response. This is discussed further in shloka # 27.

Gyani enjoys great ananda born out of knowledge of poornatvam. I the atma am Poornaha. A Gyani is one who has struggled and used Vedantic knowledge to understand knowledge to look into every aspect of this kind. It is just like, if you want to change a raga, in Carnatic music, you have to go to the svaras which go make the raga; you cannot change the raga, without changing the svara; if I want to change the shape of this hall, I will have to take every brick and rearrange it.

If my life has to change every thought has to change. Jealousy, sorrow, anger are all just thoughts. These thoughts just arise and we respond. Our life is really a collection of all these thoughts. It is a time consuming process to change our thoughts.

Prashanta Manasa is one whose mind is free of unhealthy thoughts. He is not thoughtless; but his thoughts are undisturbing thoughts; thoughts that do not disturb the mind.

In fact for one hour you are listening to my talk during which I am presenting ideas to you; and the ideas are generated in your mind in the form of thought alone. Now is this thought a burden to you? If it were a burden, you would not come here.

So, thought is not samsara; you need not eliminate any thought; compassion is a thought pattern; and compassion is not samsara; love is not samsara; generosity is not samsara; **burdening thoughts are replaced by the thoughts which are not a burden; and that is called shanta vrittihi; they are called satvika vrittihi; satvika vritti** means they are light in your mind; they sit light in your mind; they are not a burden to

you; and such a mind the Gyani enjoys.

Mind is, however, a burden for a person who does not have peace of mind.

Thus, Gyani enjoys Prashanta Manasa. How does he enjoy such a mind? He enjoys a peaceful mind by removing Rajasika Vrithi, by removing Krodha, madha, lobha etc. The word Shanta-rajasa means removing burdensome thoughts. Let me enjoy what I have rather than comparing with others. Similarly, Tamas Vrithi also subsides.

Vidyaranya Swami in Panchadasi says: satvika vritti is called shanta vritti; rajasa vritti is called ghora vritti; tamasa vritti is called muda vritti. Mudam means full of delusion and confusion.

This re-look is to be done compulsorily by not forgetting the problem. Rather we should see the problem through the Vedantic mind. For this Vedantic meditation is not important. Moreover, Vedantic meditation is not just sitting in a posture. Even restructuring your perspective during a walk is nidhidhyasanam. One who has thus become one with Brahman is known as Brahmabhut.

Brahmabhutam means instead of identifying with anatma; he has learned to own up to the atma swarupam; instead of claiming body as I, instead of claiming the mind as I, he looks upon them as instruments of transactions; I am the chaitanyam behind these instruments. This shifting to the first person singular is called brahmi bhavah; therefore brahmabhutam. What is the benefit of this meditation? Uttamam sukham upaiti.

Shloka # 28:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 6.28 ॥

Thus integrating himself always, the sinless Yogin easily

achieves contact with Brahaman or infinite bliss.

Same idea is prescribed in a different manner.

One gets shanti or gyana phalam. Meditation does not produce it. It removes obstacles to our knowledge and lets it flow. Gyanam is shanti. Obstacles are our habits. By reorienting our habits knowledge just flows. Situations, now, do not produce as much anxiety. This is a slow and gradual process. Even as our physical change is slow and gradual so it is with Vedantic knowledge. Shanti gradually increases. Who attains this sukham? The Yogi. How does he bring this transformation? It is like physiotherapy for an arm or a leg. It is a time consuming process as the mind is very subtle. In shloka, atma means mind, Yunjan means reorienting the mind; Vigatkalamasha means unhealthy habits, habitual negative thinking, will gradually leave.

Everything like anger is a viparitha bhavana; frustration is a viparitha bhavana. Vigata Kalmasham means unhealthy habits of thinking gradually come down.

So, sitting in a place think about the things that disturb you. You have to be alert in day-to-day transactions.

That is also nidhidhyasanam; but there are certain issues for which general alertness is not sufficient; you have to sit and ask the questions: Oh Mind why are you disturbed by that; and look at in the light of Vedanta; ask the question, can you change the situation; or is it choice-less; if you can change better work on changing; rather than working on worrying; And if you cannot change at all; learn to reorient mind to withstand the changeless situations; thereafter one should not talk about that situation again and again; because after knowing that it cannot be changed, what is the use of talking; I stop talking about the disturbing situation; I talk about the change required in my mind to withstand the situation; that is a worthwhile effort.

Citing example of camera, if somebody is taking a picture with a camera and focus requires me to go back, but you cannot because there is a void behind you. This is a choice-less situation where cameraman has to go or you go. You cannot change the situation. Then one has to change the mind one has to toughen it to reduce impact of the situation. Therefore, change the world if you can; otherwise change your mind; stop complaining and worrying.

In shloka, Sada means regular alertness.

If this is done Yogi attains great ananda. Sukhen means effortlessly. Jivan mukti is an experienced result; you experience it. This ananda comes from my association with Brahman or Atman by owning up to my higher nature.

Does it mean he should not enjoy Vishayanada? He can enjoy it so long as it is Dharmic. Once I have

got brahmananda; it is like having a generator inside me; as long as vishayananda, the corporation power is there; you use it; when it goes off, you need not worry, you start your own generator. Similarly when vishayananda is there; certainly Gyani is going to appreciate the beauty; but when it goes he is not worried because he is automatically connected to the Brahmananda and atyantam sukham.

Take away:

1. The fundamental teachings of Vedanta are:

- Brahman is the substratum of the world.
- The world is dependent on Brahman.
- Brahman the substratum is none other than myself.

3. Our life is really a collection of all our thoughts. Jealousy, sorrow, anger are all just thoughts. These thoughts just arise and we respond. If my life has to change every thought has to change.

4. Thoughts that are burdening are replaced by the thoughts that are not a burden. Non-burdening thoughts are called shanta vrittihi or satvika vrittihi.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Chapter 6: Verses 25 to 27

Greetings All,

Shloka # 25:

अप्युपनिषत्सु श्रुत्वा श्रद्धांशुः
अप्युपनिषत्सु श्रुत्वा श्रद्धांशुः 6.25

Withdraw gradually, with the help of the resolute intellect; anchoring the mind in the Self, think of nothing whatsoever.

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, Upamed meaning one should gradually withdraw the mind, from anatma, and all the objects, because in this meditation, we want to dwell upon the very subject itself. So here the meditation is on the meditator, himself; I want to dwell upon my own nature. Since it is a subjective meditation, all the objective thoughts should be gradually eliminated.

The objects are divided into three:

- 1) The first object is external world; because it is an object of my experience;
- 2) The second object is my physical body itself; which is also an object of my experience;
- 3) The third object is my own mind; which is also an object of my experience.

In meditation, we withdraw from the world, then the body, then from the mind and then as the witness conscious principle, observe the mind. So, you are observing your own thoughts. Meditation is difficult. The mind tends to run to different places. Many emotions come up. It is escapism. All emotions are also part of the mind, which I am not. Many emotions are in my control and some are not.

So, therefore emotions will come. In Vedantic meditation, I do not try to control my emotions. In Vedantic meditation, I try to objectify my emotions. I try to stand aloof from my emotions and try to see that they also do not belong to me. So body has got its nature; mind has got its nature; and I am different from both of them.

Some people get pleasant experiences when the mind is quiet, however, they go away once mind becomes active. This is also Anatma. Enjoying pleasantness of meditation is an obstacle. This pleasantness belongs to the quiet mind while we are talking about the witness Atma. I want to own up to this Atma. Any special experience is not Me. Special experiences are like any other sensory experience such as eating an ice cream. It is another bondage. If I own up to "I am" the witness to the mind and all its experiences, it is worthwhile.

Therefore, Sri Krishna says; Shanaih Shanair uparamed; one should withdraw; with the help of buddhya or the intellect, which has the backing of this teaching. That is why Vedantic

meditation is possible only by a student of the Gita Upanishad; a non-student can never practice Vedantic meditation.

When, Sri Krishna says buddhya, it means Vedantic meditation is practiced with the help of the intellect, which has the teaching behind it. And the teaching is: I am neither the mind, nor the experiences of the mind

With the help of the intellect it has to be withdrawn. It must be an intellect supported by will power. Without will power I will get attached to pleasant experiences.

Having withdrawn, the mind should abide in the atma. How does the mind abide in the atma? Citing an example when we say a clip is resting on the table, can we say the same for Atma? No such thing happens. Atma is all pervading. There is no need to bring the mind to Atma. Atma is everywhere.

Here it means mind entertains the thought of God or Himalayas etc. So, here the mind is thought centered on the self as, " I am of the nature of consciousness". I enliven body and mind. Body and mind are only mediums. They can come and go.

So the experience comes and goes; the experiencer "I", the consciousness, am eternally present. So I am eternal consciousness, I am all pervading consciousness; I am

Undivided consciousness; I am untainted consciousness.

This is akhanda akara Vrithihi centered on the Atma. Here there is no subject object division. **Entertain only thought of yourself. Don't disturb yourself by thinking of other thoughts.**

In the shloka, nakinchidapi chintayet, does not mean don't entertain thoughts. Self-thought has to be there for Vedantic meditation. Otherwise it is called blind Samadhi. Blind Samadhi means, absolute thoughtless state. In Sanskrit it is

permanently peaceful; peacefully rich; peacefully poor; peacefully with house; peacefully without house; peacefully with people, peacefully without people; peacefully young, peacefully old; peacefully black haired; peacefully white haired also; or any other color. So this is uttamam sukham upaiti; this is the phalam.

Take away:

1. Vedantic meditation is entertaining only thought of yourself. Don't disturb yourself by thinking of other thoughts.
2. Repeated listening to teaching is also a form of Vedantic meditation.
3. Don't fall in love with any idea or object. Ownership is due to obsession. Obsession is due to distraction.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

Bhagawat Geeta, Class 91: Chapter 6, Verses 23 to 25

Greetings All,

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, Sri Krishna has been talking about vedantic meditation as a means of assimilating self-knowledge. He does not

prescribe meditation for gaining self-knowledge. Shankaracharya says self-knowledge can take place only from the teachings of a Guru. If one does not gain the knowledge by listening the first time one has to listen to it again and again, from the teacher, until it dawns in you. If this process requires another life (or lives) so be it. This is the only method of obtaining Atma Gyanam. Meditation is not prescribed for obtaining Atma Gyanam. Meditation is however accepted by the scriptures for assimilating Atma Gyanam. Citing an example it is the digested food that we assimilate into the body and not the amount of food that we eat. So what we listen to is not as important as to what we assimilate from listening. **It is the replaying of Sravanam that is Nidhidhyasanam.**

Steps of meditation are Dharana, Dhyanam and Samadhi. First withdraw mind from worldly personality. And bring the mind to vedantic teaching; this bringing the mind to the teaching is known as dharana; and then trying to dwell upon the teaching continuously is dhyanam; and then I am absorbed in the teaching, which talks about my higher nature, that I forget all my relative personality; this is Samadhi. One forgets family, relationships, friends etc., they all become incidental. In this stage only a thought such as Aham Brahma Asmi, Aham atma asmi etc., dominates.

As Wayne Dyer, beautifully says; **you are not a human being with a spiritual experience; but you are a spiritual being with an incidental human experience.** Do not look for a spiritual experience; when you are looking for a spiritual experience you are just a human being seeking a spiritual experience. That is the worst that can happen.

On the other hand, through teaching, what we have to assimilate is: I do not seek spiritual experience, I want to own up to the fact that I am a spiritual being, all the time; while the human experience is something which comes and goes.

The steps of meditation of dharana, dhyana samadhi culminates in a state of total absorption. One is absorbed in "satchidanda svarupah asmi". This absorption is called nirvikalpaka Samadhi. Nirvikalpaka samadhi is the phalam of ashtanga yoga.

Sri Krishna is giving seven definitions of nirvikalpa Samadhi from different perspectives.

1. **Chitta Uparamanam:** in which the mind is totally relaxed, tranquil, at home, at peace and at poise. Chitta means mind, and uparamanam means quietude. It is not a thoughtless mind, but one without disturbance. Thoughts should not disturb. Knowledge is also a thought but not a disturbance. You can have thoughts with a quiet mind. Nidhidhyasanam is a quiet mind with Vedantic thoughts or it is quiet due to Vedantic thoughts.
2. **Atma Darshanam:** is a state in which one invokes, in his mind, the knowledge he has received. The knowledge received is that: I am not the body, I am not the sense, I am not the mind, and I am the consciousness principle, different from the body, pervading and illumining the body. This owing up to my own nature is atma darshanam. This was the second definition.
3. **Atyanta sukham:** It means the highest happiness, in which I own up to the fact that my very nature is happiness. It is not an experiential happiness. Experiential happiness is finite, because it is time bound. This is a happiness born out of the knowledge that I do not miss anything in life; I do not lack anything in life; I do not have any imperfection; this very understanding gives me a sense of fulfillment. This knowledge born fulfillment is called atyantikam sukham.
4. **Tatva nishta:** Which means that it is a state in which a person abides in his true nature; that he will not slip out of his svarupam even during transaction. So this is called not losing the center of gravity. The center of

gravity is aham satchidanandasvarupah. This is called tattva nishta or also sahaja samadhi.

5. **Atyantika Labha:** it is the greatest and latest accomplishment in life. It is coming back to myself after going in search of peace all over and discovering that peace and fullness is my very nature. So, a person who discovers his svarupam has got a sense that I have come back. So this is called atyantika labha the highest gain in life.
6. **Atyantika dukha nivrithi:** that gaining which a person does not know how to grieve in life; there is no more sorrow in life; even the worst crisis does not shake him; because he is very clearly aware that the whole anatma consists of body-mind and the world. This anatma is unpredictable and fluctuations will take place anytime. At the physical level any kind of change including death can occur at any time.

He is aware that similar changes can occur at the mental as well as world level as well. He is aware of anatma and is mentally prepared for all eventualities. Nothing comes as a shock for him. His initial reaction to a situation may be "what?" but it is soon converted to "so what?" He recovers very quickly. This is the sixth definition, atyantika dukha nivrithih or total freedom from sorrow.

Now Sri Krishna provides the seventh definition in the next shloka.

Shloka # 23:

॥ अत्यन्तदुःखनिवृत्तिर्योगोऽस्ति ॥
॥ अत्यन्तदुःखनिवृत्तिर्योगोऽस्ति ॥ 6.23 ॥

Know that to be styled Yoga which consists in disjunction from experienced-pain. This Yoga has slowly got to be practiced with an undejected mind.

It is a technical definition to avoid confusion. Confusion can

come from third definition of Athyantika Sukham. One may think knowledge and Samadhi will bring the highest happiness. This is a mistake as anything that comes in time will also be lost in time.

If one gets pleasure from meditation, when you are out of meditation, it will go away. So, never seek mystic pleasure, says Vedanta. Some people who experience nirvikalpika Samadhi say after Samadhi they experience pain.

Therefore even mystic bliss if it arrives, it is subject to time, and therefore Krishna wants to say that, infinite ananda should be that which never arrives. If it should be infinite ananda; it should never arrive at a place, or time or in particular condition; infinite ananda is possible only if it is already here and now. Infinite by definition is that which is here and now.

Then how to get infinite ananda? Infinite ananda in Vedanta means you remove superimposed sorrow or obstacles in your swarupam. Thus, when a doctor treats you he is not giving you health. We have acquired a disease and doctor has removed the disease, which is an obstacle to one's health. I have just come back to health. Swasthaha means being in one's own nature. When we enjoy ananda we are in our natural state. Sorrow is due to our misconception and is removed by atma gyanam.

Every sorrow is unnatural. It belongs to body, mind or world and none of them is your nature. Hence the shloka, Chidananda rupaha shivahom shivoham. **Dissociation from association is ananda.** We have associated with sorrow due to ignorance. And, therefore, **samadhihi is dissociation from association with sorrow.** We have associated ourselves with sorrow, because of our ignorance, and that wrong association we now give up.

We do not develop a new association with happiness because we need not associate with happiness since happiness happens to

vigyanamaya; vigyanamaya to anandamaya. Body is gross; mind is subtle, mind is gross, consciousness is subtle.

I am not thought or mind; although, I am aware of thought and mind. I am not thought. I am witness consciousness. This must be done gradually to withdraw from all five koshas.

In mind don't be lost in thought rather becomes the witness consciousness. Once mind is in Atma, let it dwell there. Let it dwell on the features of Atma such as: I am the consciousness, which goes beyond the body; I am the formless consciousness; I am uncontaminated consciousness etc.

Hence, meditation is not possible without knowledge from a guru. Dwell even on a word such as: Aham Apanga.

How to do it?

Mind should remain in atma. What does it mean? Atma is all pervading. Mind is not away from atma. Nothing is away from atma. So, placing the mind means entertaining the thought of atma or centered on atma. Thus, thinking of Badrinath means your thoughts are on Badrinath. So, mind should have thoughts centered on atma. Thoughts such as: Aham brahma asmi. Even when thoughts are changing, I don't change. This is called akhanda akara vrithi or atma centered thoughts. **Flow of atma thought to the exclusion of anatma thought is meditation.**

Take away:

1. I do not seek spiritual experience, I want to own up to the fact that I am a spiritual being, all the time, while the human experience is something which comes and goes.
2. The seventh definition of nirvikalpika Samadhi is dissociation from sorrow. (shloka # 23).
3. Dissociation from association with sorrow is ananda.
4. In mind, don't be lost in thought rather becomes the witness consciousness.

5. Flow of atma thought to the exclusion of anatma thought is meditation.
6. It is the replaying of Sravanam that is Nidhidhyasanam.
7. You are not a human being with a spiritual experience; but you are a spiritual being with an incidental human experience.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy